

CLAIMS

1. A helmet comprising a shock absorbing element and means associated therewith to provide an indication of the impact status or history of the helmet.
2. A helmet according to Claim 1, wherein the said means comprises an
5 electrical impact sensor.
3. A helmet according to Claim 2, wherein the electrical impact sensor comprises at least one capacitor, the electrical capacitance of which changes in the event of an impact.
4. A helmet according to Claim 2, wherein the electrical impact sensor
10 comprises a strain gauge sensitive to the occurrence of an impact.
5. A helmet according to Claim 4, wherein the strain gauge incorporates a piezo electric component.
6. A helmet according to Claim 2, wherein the electrical impact sensor comprises a quantum tunnelling material, and monitoring means arranged to monitor
15 the electrical properties of the quantum tunnelling material.
7. A helmet according to any one of Claims 2 to 6, further comprising a memory arranged to record data representative of the occurrence of impacts.
8. A helmet according to any one of Claims 2 to 7, further comprising a monitoring unit arranged to monitor the output of the impact sensor.

9. A helmet according to Claim 8, wherein the monitoring unit is connected to the impact sensor periodically.
10. A helmet according to any one of Claims 2 to 9, further comprising a warning device arranged to trigger a warning in the event that the impact sensor has detected the occurrence of an impact of magnitude greater than a predetermined magnitude.
11. A helmet according to Claim 1, wherein the said means comprises a component the state of which changes in the event of an impact exceeding a predetermined threshold, the state of the component being apparent to a user of the helmet.
12. A helmet according to Claim 11, wherein the change in state of the component is visibly apparent.
13. A helmet according to Claim 12, wherein the helmet includes a transparent element to allow the state of the component to be determined.
14. A helmet according to any one of Claims 12 and 13, wherein the colour of the component changes in the event of an impact.
15. A helmet according to Claim 12 or Claim 13, wherein the component is arranged to break, crack, shatter or otherwise visibly deform in the event of an impact.
16. A helmet according to Claim 12 or Claim 13, wherein the component

includes at least one rupturable ink or dye reservoir arranged to rupture, break, leak or overflow in the event of an impact.

17. A helmet substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.